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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA
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SUBJ: SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM DECLARATION ON LAW OF SEA
FOLLOWING IS DECLARATION ON LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE BY
SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM MEMBER COUNTRIES WHICH MET AT NAURU
ON JULY 26. FYI-FOLLOWING COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES
ATTENDED MEETING: FIJI, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, TONGA, WESTERN
SAMOA, COOK ISLANDS, NIVE, SOLOMON ISLANDS, TUVALU,
GILBERT ISLANDS, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

QUOTE: AT THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
FORUM THE LEADERS OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
UNDERLINE THE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO DEVELOPMENTS NOW
TAKING PLACE IN CONNECTION WITH THE LAW OF THE SEA.
HAVING CONSIDERED A PAPER SUBMITTED BY THE PRIME MINISTER
OF FIJI, THEY REAFFIRM THE NEED FOR CONTINUING CONSULTATION
AND AGREE THAT THEIR DELEGATIONS WILL WORK TOGETHER VERY
CLOSELY AT THE FORTHCOMING SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA
CONFERENCE DUE TO OPEN IN NEW YORK ON 2 AUGUST.

THE COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN THE FORUM HAVE A COMMON
INTEREST IN SEEING A POSITIVE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE.
ALL MEMBERS STAND TO BENEFIT FROM THE CREATION OF A 200-MILE
ECONOMIC ZONE, WHOSE RESOURCES WOULD BE UNDER THEIR CONTROL,
AND FOR MANY OF THEM IT WILL OPEN THE WAY TO MAJOR NEW
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. THE STEPS THEY TAKE OVER THE NEXT
YEAR OR TWO ARE THEREFORE OF GREAT POLITICAL AS WELL AS
ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE.

THE FORUM LEADERS RECOGNIZE THAT MUCH NEEDS TO BE DONE
TO PREPARE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONES
AND TO ENSURE THAT, ONCE ESTABLISHED, THE ZONES WORK TO THE
MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC COUNTRIES, THIS WILL

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CALL FOR CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION ON A REGIONAL BASIS. THE MEMBERS OF THE FORUM WILL SEEK TO AVOID DECISIONS WHICH, BECAUSE OF LACK OF CONSULTATION OR CO-ORDINATION, COULD BENEFIT ONE OR MORE MEMBERS ONLY, AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHERS AND OF THE REGION AS A WHOLE.

SEVERAL MAJOR STEPS WILL BE NEEDED ONCE 200 MILE ZONES ARE ESTABLISHED. THESE INCLUDE NEGOTIATIONS WITH COUNTRIES THAT SEND THEIR FISHING FLEETS FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION. THE FORUM LEADERS RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF A CO-ORDINATED APPROACH IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITH DISTANT-WATER FISHING COUNTRIES THAT NOW OPERATE IN THE AREA.

IT WILL ALSO BE NECESSARY TO DEVELOP A CAPABILITY FOR MARITIME SURVEILLANCE AND POLICING. THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THIS CAN BEST BE TACKLED THROUGH JOINT OR CO-OPERATIVE ACTION.

THE FORUM AGREED THAT, GIVEN THE STAGE WHICH THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE HAS REACHED, IT WILL BE DESIRABLE FOR THE MEMBER COUNTRIES TO MEET SHORTLY AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL. THEIR OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO CONSIDER THE TIMING AND TERMS OF THE CREATION OF 200 MILE ZONES: THE PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THEM: THE CONSERVATION OF MARINE RESOURCES: THE POSSIBLE CREATION OF A SOUTH PACIFIC FISHERIES AGENCY: AND THE PROSPECTS FOR JOINT ACTION AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN MATTERS SUCH AS SURVEILLANCE AND POLICING.

THESE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION IN SUVA SOON AFTER THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE CONCLUDES. UNQUOTE. HALL